



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**PATHOGENICITY AND MOLECULAR CHARACTERISATION OF THE
VP2 GENE OF INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS**

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By

MD. MAHFUZUL HOQUE

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of Requirement for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
Universiti Putra Malaysia
June 2001**



DEDICATION

**TO MY PARENTS (LATE MD. ABDUS SATTAR AND BEGUM MAHFUZA),
UNCLE (MR. JUSTICE M. A. ROUF), WIFE (RAHIMA KHANAM) AND
SONS (RIZWANUL HOQUE AND ENAMUL HOQUE)**

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in
fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June 2001

Chairman: Abdul Rahman Omar, Ph D.

Faculty: Veterinary Medicine

Pathogenicity of four infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV) isolates was studied on specific-pathogen-free (SPF) chickens. Chickens inoculated with isolates 92/04, 94/B551 and 97/61 developed severe clinical manifestations with a high mortality ranging from 70-80%, whereas the 94/273 isolate caused 10% mortality. However, regardless of the isolates, significant differences ($p < 0.05$) were noted in the bursal scoring lesions and bursa to body weight ratio index in the infected groups in comparison to the control groups. The isolate 94/273 had limited and comparatively less haemorrhagic lesions in the bursal tissues. However, the presence of severe haemorrhagic lesions in the bursal tissues along with the non-bursal tissues (muscles, thymus, spleen and at the junction of proventriculus and gizzard) were found only in the 92/04, 97/61 and 94/B551 isolates.

The VP2 gene (1351 bp) of the isolates (92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551) was amplified and cloned and the sequences were compared with other IBDV strains. All the isolates have the unique amino acid residues at positions P222A, V256I, and L294I as found in other vvIBDV strains. Restriction fragment length polymorphism (RFLP) and sequence analysis of the VP2 hypervariable region also indicated that all the isolates can be classified as vvIBDV based on the presence of *SspI* and *TaqI* sites at the nucleotide positions 1011 and 833, respectively. All the isolates except 94/273 also have a *StyI* site at nucleotide position 888. The absence of *StyI* site in this isolate is associated with amino acid substitution at 254 from G to S in variant strain. The 94/273 also has an amino acid substitution at 270 from A to E as found in apathogenic IBDV. Thus, this is a first report on the isolation of vvIBDV with some genotypic characteristic of variant and apathogenic IBDV strains. The 94/B551 also has one amino acid substitution at position 300 E to S, which is uncommon among other vvIBDV isolates. Based on the RFLP analysis the Malaysian (92/04, 94/273 and 97/61) and Bangladeshi (94/B551) isolates can be differentiated using the restriction enzymes *PstI*, *MboI* and *TaqI*. The deduced VP2 amino acids encoded by 92/04 is identical to the vvIBDV strains from Israel, Japan and UK, whereas the other isolates (94/273 and 94/B551) have one to three amino acid substitutions, indicating that the vvIBDV is evolving. However, the phylogenetic analysis suggested that the isolates are very close to each other and all of them may have derived from same origin as the vvIBDV strains isolated from China, Japan and Europe.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
sebagai memenuhi keperluan Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KEPATOGENAN DAN PENCIRIAN MOLEKUL GEN VP2 VIRUS
PENYAKIT BURSA BERJANGKIT**

Oleh

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Kepatogenan empat strain virus penyakit bursa berjangkit (IBDV) ke atas ayam bebas patogen khusus (SPF) telah dikaji. Ayam yang diinokulat dengan strain 92/04, 94/273 dan 97/61 menunjukkan manifestasi klinikal yang teruk dengan kadar kematian tinggi diantara 70-80%, manakala isolate 94/273 menyebabkan kematian 10%. Walau bagaimanapun, tanpa mengambil kira strain, terdapat perbezaan yang ketara ($p < 0.05$) dalam skor lesi bursa dan indek nisbah bursa kepada berat badan bagi kumpulan terjangkit berbanding dengan kumpulan kawalan. Strain 94/273 mempunyai lesi hemoraj yang kurang dan terhad dalam tisu bursa. Walau bagaimanapun, kehadiran lesi hemoraj yang teruk pada tisu bursa dan tisu bukan bursa (otot, timus, limpa dan pada persimpangan proventrikulus dan hempedal) dijumpai hanya dalam strain 92/04, 97/61 dan 94/B551. Gen VP2 (1351 bp) bagi strain (92/04, 94/273 dan 94/B551) diamplifikasi dan diklonkan dan jujukan tersebut dibandingkan dengan strain IBDV yang lain. Kesemua strain mempunyai residu asid amino pada kedudukan P222A,

V256I dan L294I sebagaimana yang dijumpai dalam strain vvIBDV lain. Analisa fragmen pembatasan polimorfoma (RFLP) dan jujukan bagi kawasan hiper boleh ubah VP2 juga menunjukkan bahawa kesemua strain boleh dikelaskan sebagai vvIBDV berdasarkan kehadiran tapak *SspI* dan *TaqI* pada kedudukan nukleotid 1011 dan 833. Kesemua strain kecuali 94/273 mempunyai tapak *StyI* pada kedudukan nukleotid 888. Ketiadaan tapak *StyI* dalam strain ini dikaitkan dengan penggantian asid amino pada 254 daripada G kepada S dalam strain varian. Strain 94/273 juga mempunyai penggantian asid amino pada 270 daripada A kepada E sebagaimana yang dijumpai dalam IBDV bukan patogen. Oleh itu, ini merupakan laporan pertama ke atas pemencilan vvIBDV dengan sebahagian ciri genotip bagi strain IBDV varian dan bukan patogen. Strain 94/B551 juga mempunyai satu penggantian asid amino pada kedudukan 300 E kepada S, yang mana jarang didapati di kalangan strain vvIBDV lain. Berdasarkan analisa RFLP, strain Malaysia (92/04, 94/273 dan 97/61) dan strain Bangladesh (94/B551) boleh dibezakan dengan menggunakan enzim pembatas *PstI*, *MboI* dan *TaqI*. Asid amino VP2 yang dikodkan oleh 92/4 adalah sama dengan strain vvIBDV dari Israel, Jepun dan UK, manakala strain-strain lain (94/273 dan 94/B551) mempunyai satu hingga tiga penggantian asid amino, menunjukkan bahawa vvIBDV terlibat sedang berubah. Walau bagaimanapun analisa filogenesis mencadangkan bahawa strain-strain tersebut adalah sangat hampir antara satu sama lain dan kesemua strain mungkin datang dari asal yang sama seperti strain vvIBDV yang dipencilkan dari China, Jepun dan Eropah.

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I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or other institutions.



MD. MAHFUZUL HOQUE

Date: 25 June 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
APPROVAL SHEETS	ix
DECLARATION FORM	xi
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xx
 CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION.....	1
 II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	10
Infectious Bursal Disease.....	10
Infectious Bursal Disease Virus	12
Physico-chemical Properties.....	13
IBDV Replication.....	15
Resistance to Chemical and Physical Agent.....	17
Propagation.....	18
Transmission	20
Susceptibility.....	21
Pathogenesis.....	22
Incubation Period and Clinical Sign.....	27
Gross Pathology.....	29
Histopathology.....	32
Immunosuppression.....	34
Diagnosis.....	38
Prevention and Control.....	44
Genome Structure.....	49
Viral Proteins.....	52
Antigenic and Virulence Variation.....	55
Molecular Mechanisms of RNA Virus Evolution.....	58
Phylogenetic Reconstruction.....	63
 III PATHOGENICITY OF INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS IN SPECIFIC PATHOGEN FREE CHICKEN.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Materials and Methods.....	80
IBDV Isolates.....	80
Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) Eggs.....	81
Specific Pathogen Free Chickens... ..	81
Preparation of Bursal Homogenate.....	81
Propagation of Viruses on Specific Pathogen Free	



Eggs.....	82
Titration of IBDV.....	84
Pathogenicity Studies in SPF Eggs.....	85
Pathogenicity Studies in SPF Chickens.....	85
Immunogenicity Studies.....	86
IBDV Challenged.....	87
Histopathology.....	88
Bursa and Spleen to Body Weight Ratio.....	90
Statistical Analysis.....	90
Negative Staining	90
Transmission Electron Microscopy.....	91
Results.....	92
Gross Pathological Changes and Mortality in SPF Embryonated Chicken Eggs.....	92
Clinical Signs in SPF Chickens.....	93
Gross Pathology.....	94
Immunogenicity Studies.....	98
Bursa/Spleen and Body Weight Ratio.....	98
Histopathology.....	98
Electron Microscopy by Negative Staining.....	102
Transmission Electron Microscopy.....	102
Discussion.....	110
IV AMPLIFICATION AND CLONING OF INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS VP2 GENE.....	114
Introduction.....	114
Materials and Methods.....	116
IBDV Isolates.....	116
Purification of Viruses.....	116
Extraction of RNA.....	117
Determination of RNA Concentration and Purity.....	118
Reverse Transcription and Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR).....	118
Agarose Gel Electrophoresis.....	120
Purification of VP2 Gene by GENECLEAN Method.....	122
Cloning of Full Length VP2 Gene.....	123
Analysis of Positive Colonies.....	126
Preservation of Recombinant Plasmid.....	127
Plasmid Extraction and Analysis.....	127
Determination of DNA Concentration and Purity.....	130
Restriction Enzyme Analysis of the Plasmid.....	132
Results.....	132
Purification of Virus.....	132
Amplification of VP2 Gene.....	132
Analysis of Recombinant Plasmid.....	133
Quantitation of Plasmid DNA.....	134
Restriction Digestion Analysis.....	134

Discussion.....	143
V RESTRICTION FRAGMENT LENGTH POLYMORPHISM (RFLP) OF INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS.....	147
Introduction.....	147
Materials and Methods.....	150
IBDV Isolates.....	150
Amplification and Cloning of the Complete VP2 Gene	150
Amplification of VP2 Hypervariable Region from	
Cloned Recombinant Plasmid.....	151
Amplification of VP2 Hypervariable Region from Viral	
RNA.....	152
Restriction Enzymes Digestion of the VP2	
Hypervariable Region	152
Results.....	153
RFLP of the VP2 Hypervariable Region.....	153
Discussion.....	160
VI SEQUENCE AND PHYLOGENETIC ANALYSIS OF INFECTIOUS BURSAL DISEASE VIRUS (IBDV).....	163
Introduction.....	163
Materials and Methods.....	165
IBDV Isolates.....	165
Purification of Viruses and Extraction RNA.....	166
Amplification of VP2 Gene.....	166
Construction of VP2 Recombinant Plasmid.....	166
Sequencing and Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis	166
Primer Designing.....	168
Estimating Melting Temperature.....	169
Primer Quantitation.....	169
Sample Preparation for Sequencing.....	169
Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis	170
Sequence Assembly and Analysis.....	173
Construction of Phylogenetic Tree.....	174
Analysis of VP2 Antigenicity.....	175
Results.....	176
Sequence Analysis of Nucleotides and Amino acid	
of VP2 Gene.....	176
Percent Homology.....	179
Analysis of the Deduced Amino Acids.....	180
Phylogenetic Analysis.....	182
Antigenic Index	183
Discussion.....	215

VII	GENERAL DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	222
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	230
	APPENDICES.....	262
A	Chemicals and Reagents.....	262
B	Fifty Percent Embryo Lethal Dose.....	264
C	Buffer and Media.	268
D	Transformation Efficiency.....	270
E	Chromose Result of the VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates.....	271
F	Tables.....	273
VITA		275

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
3.1 Gross and Pathological Changes and Mortality Caused by Different IBDV Isolates in SPF Embryos.....	96
3.2 The Occurrence of Haemorrhages in the Bursa of Fabricius, Skeletal Muscles and at the Junction of Proventriculus and Gizzard of the Dead and Sacrificed Chickens at Days 3 and 4 Post-inoculation of Different Isolates.....	97
3.3 Bursa: Body Weight and Spleen: Body Weight Ratios Following Inoculation with $10^{4.8}$ EID ₅₀ of Infectious Bursal Disease Virus at Different Days (Mean \pm SD).....	100
3.4 IBD Antibody Titres Following Infection with IBDV Isolates..	101
3.5 IBDV Antibody Following Challenge with 92/04 and 97/61 in SPF Chickens Infected with 94/273.....	101
4.1 RT-PCR Reaction for the Amplification of Full Length VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates.....	121
4.2 Primers Used for Amplification of Full Length VP2 Gene (~1.35 kb).....	122
4.3 Quantitation of Plasmid DNA of IBDV Isolates.....	136
5.1 Restriction Enzyme Analysis of the 474 bp (<i>AccI</i> to <i>SpeI</i>) Fragment of Hypervariable Region of VP2 Gene of IBDV...	155
5.2 Digestion Patterns of VP2 Hypervariable Region of IBDV Isolates.....	156
6.1 Primers Used for Sequencing the VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551.....	173
6.2 Nucleotides and Amino Acid Residues Changes of Various IBDV Strains VP2 Hypervariable Region (Nucleotide Positions 746 to 1081) and VP2 Gene (Nucleotide Positions 132 to 1483).....	200
6.3 Comparison of Amino Acid Substitutions at Different Positions for the Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with Other Published IBDV Strains.....	205



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Genome Organisation of Avibirnavirus (Infectious Bursal Disease Virus).....	51
2a	Phylogenetic Trees Based on the Nucleotide Sequence of IBDV Isolates Using the Neighbour-joining Method.....	74
2b	Phylogenetic Tree Based on Amino Acid of Hypervariable Region of IBDV Isolates Using the UPGMA Method.....	75
2c	Phylogenetic Relationship Between Australian and Oversea Isolates of IBDV Using the Neighbour-joining Method.....	76
3a	Normal (Control) Embryo from SPF Chicken Egg.....	103
3b	Haemorrhagic Embryo with Hepatic Lesions from IBDV Isolate 94/273 Infected SPF Chicken Egg (Day 5 Post Inoculation).....	103
4a	Normal (Control) Bursa of Fabricius from SPF Chicken.....	104
4b	Haemorrhagic Bursa of Fabricius from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 4 Post Inoculation).....	104
5	Proventriculus and Gizzard from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 4 Post Inoculation) Showing Haemorrhages at the Junction.....	105
6a	Histological Section of Normal (Control) Bursa of Fabricius from SPF Chicken at Day 4 (Score 1) (Magnification x 100).....	106
6b	Histological Section of Bursa of Fabricius from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 4 Post Inoculation) Showing Necrosis of the Lymphoid Follicles and Infiltration of Inflammatory Cells in the Interstitial Connective Tissue (Score 5) (Magnification x 40).....	106
7a	Histological Section of Normal (Control) Bursa of Fabricius from SPF Chicken at Day 8 Post Inoculation (Score 1) (Magnification x 100).....	107
7b	Histological Section of Bursa of Fabricius from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 8 Post Inoculation) Showing Necrosis and Vacuolation of the Lymphoid Follicles and Infiltration of Inflammatory Cells and Fibrosis in the Interstitial Connective Tissue (Score 5) (Magnification x 100).....	107
8a	TEM of Bursa of Fabricius from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 3 Post Inoculation) Showing a Cluster of IBDV Particles (arrow) in the Cytoplasm of Lymphoid Cell (Magnification x 10,000).....	108

8b	TEM of Bursa of Fabricius from IBDV Isolate 92/04 Infected SPF Chicken (Day 3 Post Inoculation) Showing Membrane Enclosed Mature IBDV Particles in Lymphoid Cell (Magnification 20,000).....	109
9	TEM by Negative Staining Showing IBDV Particles from 92/04 Infected Bursa of Fabricius (10k x 75 kv).....	110
10	The Map of pCR2.1 TOPO Vector with a PCR Product Inserted by TA Cloning Along with the Sequencing Data....	124
11	RT- PCR Product of the Expected IBDV VP2 Gene Using Specific Primers.....	137
12	Blue and White Colony Screening for VP2 Inserts of IBDV Isolates 92/04.....	138
13	PCR Screening for Recombinant VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates 94/B551 and 94 /273	139
14	Transformants' Plasmid Analysis on 1.0% Agarose Gel.....	140
15	Restriction Digestion of the Recombinant Plasmids with <i>EcoRI</i> and <i>BglII</i> Enzymes of IBDV Isolates 92/04 and 94/273.....	141
16	Double Digestion of the Recombinant Plasmid with <i>EcoRI</i> and <i>BglII</i> Enzymes of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551.....	142
17	Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphism (RFLP) Patterns of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with the Restriction Enzyme <i>SspI</i> and <i>TaqI</i>	157
18	Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphism (RFLP) Patterns of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with the Restriction Enzyme <i>PstI</i> and <i>MboI</i>	158
19	Restriction Fragment Length Polymorphism (RFLP) Patterns of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with the Restriction Enzyme <i>SylI</i>	159
20	Nucleotide Sequences and Translation of Amino Acid of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolate 92/04.....	186
21	Nucleotide Sequences and Translation of Amino Acid of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolate 94/273.....	188
22	Nucleotide Sequences and Translation of Amino Acid of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolate 94/B551.....	190
23	Sequence Alignment of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551.....	192
24	Percent Similarity of Nucleotide Sequence of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with Other IBDV.....	201
25	Amino Acid Alignment of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551.....	202
26	Phylogenetic Tree Construction Based on Nucleotides of the Hypervariable Region of VP2 (435bp) of IBDV Isolates.	206
27	Phylogenetic Tree Based on Amino Acid Residue of the	

	Hypervariable Region of VP2 (206-350) of IBDV Isolates...	207
28	Antigenic Index Profiles of the Hypervariable Region of VP2 Gene of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with Other IBDV Isolates.....	208
29	Comparison of Hydrophilicity Plot of IBDV Isolates 92/04, 94/273 and 94/B551 with the vvIBDV, Variant, Vaccine and Classical strains.....	209
30	Karplus-Schulz Flexibility Areas (KS) and Other Major and Minor Peaks of IBDV Isolates of the Hypervariable Region.	211
31	Protein Profile of Deduced Amino Acid Residue of Hypervariable Region of VP2 (Amino Acid 206 to 350) from the IBDV Isolate 92/04.....	212
32	Protein Profile of Deduced Amino Acid Residue of Hypervariable Region of VP2 (Amino Acid 206 to 350) from the IBDV Isolate 94/273.....	213
33	Protein Profile of Deduced Amino Acid Residue of Hypervariable Region of VP2 (Amino Acid 206 to 350) from the IBDV Isolate 94/B551.....	214

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AAF	Allantoamnionic fluid
AC	Antigen capture
AGDP	Agar gel diffusion precipitin
B	Bursa
B/B	Bursa/body weight
BGM	Baby grivet monkey kidney
BHK	Baby Hamster kidney
BLRI	Bangladesh Livestock Research Institute
bp	Basepair
C	Cytosine
Ca	Calcium
CAM	Chorioallantoic membrane
cDNA	Complementary deoxyribonucleic acid
CEB	Chick embryo bursa
CEF	Chicken embryo fibroblast
CEK	Chicken embryo kidney
cm	Centimetres
CMGF	Chicken myelomonocytic growth factor
CsCl	Caesium chloride
CEP	Cytopathic effect
°C	Degree Celsius
d-	Deoxy
DAS-ELISA	Double antibody sandwich
DI	Defective interfering
dd	Dideoxy
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
ds	Double stranded
DTT	Dithiothreitol
<i>E. coli</i>	<i>Escherichia coli</i>
EDTA	Ethylene diamine tetra acetic acid
EID ₅₀	Embryo infective dose fifty
ELISA	Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay
Fig	Figure
FMDV	Foot and mouth disease virus
HCl	Hydrochloric acid
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
hv	Hypervariable
IBD	Infectious bursal disease
IBDV	Infectious bursal disease virus
IFN	Interferon
kb	kilobase
kDa	kilodalton
KS	Karplus-Schulz

kV	kilovolt
LB	Luria-Bertani
LS	Least Square
M	Molar
Mab	Monoclonal antibody
MD	Maryland
ME	Minimum evolution
Mg	Magnesium
MK	Monkey kidney
ML	Maximum likelihood
MP	Maximum Parsimony
ml	Millilitre
SPF	Specific pathogen free
MVP	Malaysian Vaccine Pharmaceutical
mM	Millimolar
μm	Micrometre
μg	Microgramme
NaCl	Sodium chloride
NCR	Non coding region
ng	Nanogramme
NJ	Neighbour-joining
nm	Nanometre
NO ₂	Nitrogen dioxide
OK	Ovine kidney
ORF	Open reading frame
OsO ₄	Osmium tetra-oxide
P2	Passage two
P3	Passage three
PBS	Phosphate buffered saline
PBL	Peripheral blood lymphocytes
PCR	Polymerase chain reaction
PHA	Phytohemmagglutinin
PHYLIP	Phylogenetic interference package
p.i	Post inoculation
QGDPT	Quantitative gel diffusion precipitin test
RE	Restriction endonuclease
RFLP	Restriction fragment length polymorphism
RK	Rabbit kidney
RT	Reverse-transcriptase
RNA	Ribonucleic acid
RdRp	RNA dependent –RNA polymerase
rpm	Revolution per minute
S	Spleen
S/B	Spleen/Bursa
SD	Standard deviation
SDS	Sodium dodecyl sulphate
SN	Serum neutralisation test

SPSS	Statistical package for social science
SS	Single stranded
STC	Standard Challenge strain
TAE	Tris-acetate-EDTA
TBE	Tris-borate-EDTA
TCVN	Tissue culture virus neutralisation
TE	Tris-EDTA
TEM	Transmission electron microscopy
TEMED	N,N,N',N', -tetramethyllenediamine
T _m	Melting Temperature
Tris	2-amino-2-(hydroxymethyl)-1, 3 propandiol
U	Uracyl
UPGMA	Unweighted pair group with arithmetic mean
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
URI	Veterinary Research Institute
v _v	Very virulent
VSA	Vesicular stomatitis virus
(w/v)	Weight/volume
X-gal	5-bromo-4-chloro-3-indolyl-β-D-galactopyranoside
>	Greater than
~	Approximately

Single/Three Letter Amino Acid Code		
Alanine	A	Ala
Arginine	R	Arg
Asparagine	N	Asn
Aspartic Acid/Aspartate	D	Asp
Cysteine	C	Cys
Glutamine	Q	Gln
Glutamic Acid/Glutamate	E	Glu
Glycine	G	Gly
Histidine	H	His
Isoleucine	I	Ile
Leucine	L	Leu
Lysine	K	Lys
Methionine	M	Met
Phenylalanine	F	Phe
Proline	P	Pro
Serine	S	Ser
Threonine	T	Thr
Tryptophan	W	Trp
Tyrosine	Y	Tyr
Valine	V	Val

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Infectious bursal disease virus (IBDV) is the aetiological agent of infectious bursal disease (IBD) or Gumboro disease that causes significant losses to the poultry industries either by causing high mortality in an acute disease or as a consequence of immunosuppression in young chickens (3-6 weeks old) (Lukert and Saif, 1991; Van Den Verg, 2000). Infection by IBDV causes destruction of lymphoid organs, especially B-lymphocytes in the bursa of Fabricius (Hirai *et al.*, 1974; Saif, 1991). Two distinct serotypes of IBDV, designated serotype 1 and 2 have been identified (Jackwood and Saif, 1987). The serotype 1 strains are pathogenic to chickens and vary in their virulence, whereas serotype 2 strains, isolated from turkeys, are apathogenic for both turkeys and chickens (Ismail *et al.*, 1988; Jackwood *et al.*, 1982 and McFerran *et al.*, 1980). Serotype 1 can be divided on the basis of virulence and antigenic variation into classical virulent strain, very virulent (vv) strain and antigenic variant strain (Brown *et al.*, 1994; Lasher and Shane, 1994; Snyder, 1990 and Zierenberg *et al.*, 2000).

Infectious bursal disease is considered to be among the most costly infectious diseases affecting commercial poultry producers (Kibenge *et al.*, 1988c; Lasher and Shane, 1994 and Shane *et al.*, 1994). Economic losses

from IBD arise from direct mortality, a reduction in the performance of clinically ill birds, cost of control measures and increased carcass downgrades and condemnation due to gangrenous dermatitis, colisepticemia and air-sacculitis (Lasher and Shane, 1994; Lukert and Saif, 1997). Virus-induced immunosuppression adds to these costs, in the form of vaccination failures and increased incidence or severity of bacterial, viral, and parasitic diseases (Anderson *et al.*, 1977; Lasher and Shane, 1994).

IBDV is a non-enveloped, icosahedral particle with a genome consisting of two segments (A and B) of double-stranded (ds) RNA that are packed inside a single-shelled capsid of about 60 nm in diameter. Nucleotide sequence analysis shows that segment A (~ 3.3 kb) has a long open reading frame (ORF) of 3036 bp in length and a short ORF of 435 bp (VP5), which overlaps with the 5' end of the long ORF (Kibenge *et al.*, 1990). The long ORF encodes the VP2-VP4-VP3 polyprotein (110-kDa) which is cleaved by auto-proteolysis into individual viral proteins (VP2 and VP3) (Azad *et al.*, 1985; Hudson *et al.*, 1986). The shorter ORF has been shown to encode a small cysteine-rich 17-kDa protein (Mundt *et al.*, 1995). Of the three viral proteins, VP2 and VP3 are the major viral structural proteins, whereas VP4 is a minor protein involved in the processing of the precursor polyprotein (Dobos *et al.*, 1979; Jagadish *et al.*, 1988). The VP2 protein is exposed on the surface of the virion and contains strain-specific epitopes. *In vitro* expression of VP2 and its utilisation as an antigen revealed that VP2 is the